ACTIVIST NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF EQUALITY COLORADO
PO BOX 300476, DENVER, CO 80203
(303)839-5540 PHONE (303)839-1361 FAX
EMAIL: EQUALITYCO@AOL.COM
WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.TDE.COM/~EQUALITY

EQUALITY COLORADO

JULY/AUGUST 1997

LEGISLATIVE PLANNING DAYS ARE HERE

In fitting with Equality Colorado and Equality Lobby's efforts to be increasingly responsive to GLBT and supportive people throughout Colorado, Equality Lobby's annual Legislative Planning Day is going statewide.

Over the next month, Equality Lobby will sponsor five meetings in different parts of the state to plan for the 1998 legislative session. The summer dates will give us enough time over the next six months to do some strong local organizing about such issues as non-discrimination legislation, hate crimes, and relationship issues.

Come learn and help us determine our 1998 legislative strategy. Come meet local legislators and talk about issues of concern to you. Meet other activists in your region and develop winning action plans to help ensure success.

Register through Equality or any of the following local organizations: Lambda Community Center; Ground Zero; Pueblo After 2; Greeley Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Alliance; Aspen Gay & Lesbian Community; Western Equality; and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance of Durango.

ACTION!

▸ RSVP to Equality Lobby at 303-839-5540 or email equalityco@aol.com

- **Northern Colorado** July 12, Ft. Collins, 9:00 am - Noon
- **Western Colorado** July 26, Grand Junction, 9 am - Noon
- **Four Corners** July 29, Durango, 6-9 pm
- **Metro Area** July 31, Denver, 6-9 pm
- **Southern Colorado** August 2, Pueblo, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Lunch provided.

Gov. vetoes anti-marriage bill, appoints commission

Calling the bill unnecessary and an attack on GLBT people, and expressing concern about the safety of common law marriages, Governor Romer vetoed HB 1198, the bill to deny recognition to same-sex marriages in Colorado. This marks the second time in as many years that the Governor vetoed such a bill.

At the same time, Governor Romer appointed a commission on the Rights and Responsibilities of Same Sex Relationships to review and evaluate the legal and policy issues involved in recognizing same-sex relationships. He called upon the Right Reverent William J. Winterrowd of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado to chair the commission. The Governor seeks "rational discussion" and a search for common ground on the topic.

ACTION!

▸ Thank Governor Romer for his brave action, in the face of great political pressure, and state your hope for a fair commission. He can be contacted at 136 State Capitol, Denver, CO 80203. His phone number is 303-866-2471, his fax number is 303-866-2003, and his email address is: <Romer@governor.state.co.us>

State Employees to conference on Internet

If you work, in any capacity, for the State of Colorado, or know someone who does who is concerned about issues for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans employees, join Equality Colorado for an on-line conference to talk about employee issues with the state. This will be a chance for such employees, in all parts of Colorado, to come together to learn about domestic partnership and other issues of concern, and discuss the possibility of forming a state employees network.

ACTION!

▸ Check out Equality Colorado's website at www.tde.com/~equality for more information about the conference. If you don't have access to the internet, ask your local library, a friend, or call Equality for other ideas.

Claiming the Spirit 1997 Conference

Sign up now for the 1997 Voices of Faith *Claiming the Spirit* Conference, Thursday - Saturday, July 24-26. Tickets are $60 for the entire conference, with scholarships available for volunteers.

One-day registration for $35 is available and encouraged for those who can't attend the entire conference. Friday's focus will be transgender issues and the Shower of Stoles Project along with workshops on the Bible, spirituality, marriage, etc. Saturday will focus on working on racism and class issues within the GLBT communities.

ACTION! Contact Laurene at 303-839-5540 or email eclaurene@aol.com for information or to register.

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GLBT History Project

Equality Colorado's Public Education and Action Committee has been working with other community members on putting together a GLBT History Project in Colorado. Our focus is gathering and exhibiting oral histories, archives, and collections, while increasing awareness about our history and the need to preserve and present our heritage.

ACTION! The next meeting is Saturday, July 19, at 2:00 p.m. Call Equality Colorado at 303-839-5540 or email equalityco@aol.com for location and details.

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Neo-Nazis Retraction...

In the June Activist News, Equality Colorado urged activists to send an email to a usenet group to vote NO in a referendum about whether to allow Neo-Nazis to create a new usenet group with the title <rec.music.white-power>. We received several comments back worrying about the free-speech implications of this. We still agree with our initial impetus to run the information about the usenet group, due to the violent anti-gay implications of Neo-Nazi organizing; still we realize that it is not our place to stop them from exercising their basic freedoms of speech and association that GLBT people cherish.

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News and updates

CU Regents won't help partners: The Board of Regents of the University of Colorado system shot down a proposal to extend health benefits to the same-sex partners of university employees. One explanation for this is rumors that conservative legislators would have cut funding for the University had the benefits been granted.

Bowers an adulterous hypocrite?: Georgia's attorney general Mike Bowers won a ruling in June that said he did not break the law when he withdrew a job offer to a lesbian because she was planning to hold a private religious ceremony with another woman. Soon after, Robin Shahar, the plaintiff in the case, asked the federal appeals court to rehear the case, when recent revelations of adultery by Bowers came to light. Shahar claims that his adultery undermines Bowers' claims that her firing was permitted because of his stated concerns with office integrity and her judgement.

CALENDAR

July 1997

Fort Collins Human Rights Ordinance Meeting • Tues., July 8, 7:00 p.m. Foothills Unitarian Church, 1815 Yorktown Ave. Call 970-493-5906 for directions and details.

Northern Colorado Legislative Planning Day • Saturday July 12, 9:00 a.m. - Noon, Fort Collins.

Central Colorado Equality Day • Sunday, July 13, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Heart of the Rockies Campground, 10 miles west of Salida on Highway 50. Call 303-839-5540 or 719-530-0968 for details. Bring $5 to help offset costs.

Second Mondays • Monday, July 14, 7:00 p.m., Family of Christ Presbyterian Church, 2410 35th Ave, Greeley. Join Weld County organizers working on creating a speakers bureau.

State Employees Online Conference • Tuesday, July 22, 7:00 p.m. See www.tde.com/~equality or call 303-839-5540.

Claiming the Spirit Conference • Thurs. - Sat., July 24 - 26 $60 for 2 days. Call 303-839-5540, email eclaurene@aol.com.

Western Colorado L.P.D. • Saturday, July 26, 9am. - Noon, Grand Junction.

Four Corners L.P.D. • Tuesday, July 29, 6-9 p.m., Durango.

Metro Area L.P.D. • Thursday, July 31, 6-9 p.m., Denver.

August 1997

Southern Colorado L.P.D. • Saturday, August 2, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Pueblo.

"Drive Fore Equality" • Golf Tournament to benefit Equality Colorado and NGLTF. Sunday, August 3, 7:30 a.m. shotgun start. Riverdale Dunes Golf Course, 13300 Riverdale Rd., Brighton.

The State of Marriage • Reception and talk with Evan Wolfson, director of the Marriage Project at Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. Wednesday, August 6, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Call 303-839-5540 for details.

Equality Day at Elitch's • Thursday, August 21. Buy your $18.95 tickets at Equality Colorado, 303-839-5540.

Mayors give nod to needle exchange: The U.S. Conference of Mayors has passed a resolution urging state and local public health officials to promote needle exchange programs as part of an overall plan to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. The mayors, who met in San Francisco in June, called on Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala to exercise her authority to lift the ban on spending federal money for needle exchange programs. According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, today there are 113 needle exchange programs in 29 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Colorado's legislature this year defeated a bill which would have exempted local needle-exchange programs from the state's drug paraphernalia laws.
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